

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

**NOTE: SCOPE OF WORK AWAITING FINAL EDITS**

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| **Assignment Summary** | |
| **Assignment Code** | **UG86** |
| Country | Uganda |
| Country Project | Maize country project |
| Host Organization | Nyabbani Area Cooperative Enterprise (ACE) |
| Assignment Title | Farm business skills development |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance: | Business/Enterprise (E) |
| Type of Value Chain Activity: | Information and Input Services (S) |
| Assignment objectives | Provide framework for farm business development as a basis for transiting from subsistence farming to commercial farming |
| Desired skills | Agribusiness development specialist |
| Assignment preferred dates | May - June, 2016 |

1. **Background**

Nyabbani ACE started in 2005 and got legally registered as a cooperative in 2008. The organization is comprised of 8 RPOs- Rural Producer Organizations; each of these sends representatives at the ACE level who form the Annual General Assembly (AGM). The AGM- Annual General Meeting is held on an annual basis and elects its leaders during this period as long as their term of office has expired. The ACE has a body of 9 board members who are responsible for planning and policy implementation activities. A manager and accountant form the management team which is responsible for the day-to day operations. The board secretary is in charge of records keeping and all necessary documentation for the cooperative. At the grass roots level, the RPOs each has a leadership and management structure, these implement activities as they are introduced at the ACE level, by working with different farmer groups.

ACE members are engaged in a number of enterprises including: Maize, beans, ground nuts and are working with one of the development partners to promote soybean production. The ACE has established bulking centers at the RPO level, marketing strategies are drawn at the ACE level, the future plan is to encourage the farmers to concentrate on one common enterprise that can be bulked and marketed on a commercial scale. Services offered to the members include: Conducting farmer trainings in modern agronomic practices, bulking and marketing produce.

The ACE lacks the technical expertise and financial resources to facilitate these trainings on its own. Trainings offered by the F2F program are on a cost-share basis, this makes it fairly affordable for the ACE to roll out these trainings to a representative sample of its entire membership.

1. **Issue Description**

Improving on-farm income earnings from agriculture enterprises is considered a key strategy to address poverty and transitioning of Uganda’s agriculture from subsistence to commercial. Majority of rural farmers lack the appropriate skills to operate their farms as income generating businesses. This is understandable considering that the average Ugandan rural farmer has historically carried out farming primarily to meet household food requirements. Therefore, to improve the livelihoods of rural farmers, it is important for them to view farming as a business.

In Kamwenge, farmers grow maize and coffee for cash, with the former also serving as a food crop. A major challenge with many of Nyabbani ACE’s members is that they do not keep records, and determination of profitability is a gross estimate, at best. The failure to keep records is due to rural farmers’ lack of relevant skills necessary to operate farm enterprises on business principles. This leads to farmers remaining poor, despite all their hard work. In order to be competitive and take advantage of the new opportunities that are arising, farmers increasingly have to adapt their farm business to market changes and improve efficiency, profitability and income (FAO, Farm Business School Handbook, RAP PUBLICATION 2011/06B). As a first and necessary step, therefore, the farmers have to keep records of their expenses and incomes, short of which farming will remain largely a subsistence undertaking. With good record keeping, they will be in position to make informed business/investment decisions. Proper farm records are also important for accessing any farm credit facility. It is upon proper records that assessors’ depend to pre-qualify credit or grants.

Another challenge is that farmers generally lack knowledge in enterprise selection, enterprise budgeting, farm business planning, the role of appropriate technology (such as use of improved seeds and complementary inputs) in profit maximization, importance of functional linkages (such as input and output markets, credit and extension services) in sustaining the farm business, business performance assessment, risk management, and how various farming or business enterprises interact with each other to enhance production.

With Farmer to Farmer’s technical intervention last year, the membership of Nyabbani ACE that had been characterized by an on and off growth due to new demands and challenges in the areas of leading and managing the organization, on recommendations of the volunteer, Katherine Cassidy, a new board is in place. It is hoped that the new board is going to revitalize the cooperative to great heights. It is against this background that Nyabbani ACE is requesting for more F2F technical assistance in farm business skill development to form a basis of farming for profit.

1. **Objectives of the Assignment**

The overall aim of approaching farming as a business is to increase the incomes of the rural poor, or to put more money in the farmers’ pockets and into the rural economy. This will enable them to improve their standards of living in terms of housing, food security and basic household needs. Nyabbani ACE has requested for a F2F volunteer to assist the organization in improving farm business skills and in turn empower the farmers to operate their maize farming as a business. This is in line with the government’s aspirations to transform Uganda’s agriculture from subsistence to commercial

The specific activities for the volunteer will be to provide technical support in the areas of:

For the farmers groups:

1. Basic farm record keeping

2. Cost Benefit Analysis of various enterprises

For the leadership of the ACE, the volunteer will in addition discuss:

3. Basic financial management

This assignment is expected to attract participant as farmers, local government extension personnel and leaders. For the farmer training, the volunteer will train farmers from at least 6 RPOs with an average of 30-40 people per training. The volunteer will give each group two days for the hands-on training and evaluation, at their farmers meeting venue, in the villages. The volunteer will also offer more detailed training to 18 Training of Trainers ToT) selected from each RPO. The volunteer will develop a manual to be used by the ToTs to further the training to other member farmers. The literacy levels for RPOs member farmers range from semi-illiterate to completely illiterate. Trainings are usually conducted in centralised venues which will be agreed upon by the host, putting in consideration reduced transport costs for the participants. The venues vary from host office, bulking store, class rooms, local church, and the town council hall or under the tree, depending on accessibility.

**Host contribution** – Nyabbani ACE has committed to mobilize the RPOs members to the trainings to be conducted by the volunteer. Nyabbani ACE will also avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and actual trainings, to ensure that key staff are trained and will continue training other members even after the assignment is completed especially as leaders’ term of office expires.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

With volunteer technical assistance, farmers will be in position to make production decisions based on cost benefit analyses and use kept records to make informed decisions. Good management decisions will help reduce farmers’ production costs and risks, and improve efficiency of farm production /productivity and marketing. In addition to the training, the volunteer will be required to develop a training manual on ‘Farming as a Business’, which will be used for future reference and training. It is anticipated that once farmers begin approaching farming from a business perspective, their incomes will increase and overall their livelihoods will be improved. Furthermore, Nyabbani ACE has a wider membership than the training will cover and the Training of Trainers approach and the manual that will be developed will help Nyabbani ACE management to reach their wider membership through targeted training on farming as a business Through the end of assignment group presentation, it is anticipated that the rest of the farmers in the district shall also eventually benefit from the training and use training materials developed.

The anticipated deliverables include:

• Trainings conducted and people trained

• Training guidelines/manuals developed

• Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment

• Field trip report and expense report

1. **Schedule of Volunteer Activities in Uganda**

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| Day | Activity |
| Day 1 | Travel from home to US international airport |
| Day 2 | Arrival at Uganda Entebbe Airport, picked by Airport shuttle to Kampala and check in at Hotel. |
| Day 3 | At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter proceed to CRS office for introductions and briefings including host brief, logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices. |
| Day 4 | Travel to Kamwenge district to commence the assignment. |
| Day 5 | In the morning CRS introduces the volunteer to Nyabbani ACE board & management team. Together with CRS and the management, the volunteer will review and finalise the action -plan. The action plan should include group presentations to be done after the assignment. |
| Days 6-7 | **Group 1**:Training the board and management team |
| Days 8-9 | **Group 2**:Trainingrepresentatives from 3 RPOs (Members and RPO leaders) |
| Day 10-11 | **Group 3**: Trainingrepresentatives from 3 RPOs (Members and RPO leaders) |
| Day 12-13 | **Group 4**: Trainingrepresentatives from 3 RPOs (Members and RPO leaders) |
| Day 14-15 | **Group 5**: Trainingrepresentatives from 3 RPOs (Members and RPO leaders) |
| Day 16-17 | **Group 6**: Training of ToTs ( Village agents/Dynamic individuals from the teams already trained who can continue with the training to reach out to groups not reached by the volunteer) |
| Day 18-19 | Develop a training guide/ manual and guide the ToTs through the manual on how to use it to conduct an effective leadership training |
| Day 20-21 | Wrap up meetings, whilst emphasizing key concepts of the assignment. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations.  End of assignment presentation. |
| Day 22 | Travel back to Kampala |
| Day 23 | Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff.  Volunteer finalizes his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well as finalise liquidations with finance. |
| Day 24 | Depart for the US |
| TBD | Outreach event in the US |
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1. **Desired Volunteer Qualifications**

• Formal qualifications in agribusiness, farm business management and production economics are desirable.

• Good knowledge on smallholder subsistence and semi-commercial agriculture in developing tropical countries.

• Experience with set up and management of agro processing facility, along with strategic planning for such a facility

• Experience in working with smallholder grain farmers and farmers’ organizations.

Good writing and analytical skills, interpersonal communication and presentation skills (adult education skills).

1. **Accommodation and Other In-Country Logistics**

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa (www.fairwayhotel.co.ug).In Kamwenge; the volunteer will stay at Club Afreka Hotel.

CRS will pay for hotel accommodation, and provide volunteer with per diems to cater for meals and other incidentals. The volunteer may get an advance which has to be cleared before departing Uganda. For more information, please refer to country information that will be provided.

1. **Recommended Assignment Preparation**

* The volunteer should prepare materials for hand out which can be printed at CRS office in Kampala before commencement of the assignment. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations. In this case the volunteer will be expected to prepare training materials and have hand-outs printed at CRS offices for distribution to the participants.
* CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer becomes familiar with the Maize crops country project description prior to arrival in the country as well as country information that will be provided.

1. **Key Contacts**

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| **CRS Baltimore** | **CRS EA Regional Office** |
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